



ASSAULTS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INCIDENTS: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PREDICTORS OF LEGAL RESOLUTIONS

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Abused Women's Aid in Crisis (AWAIC)

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TOPICS

- ✖ Introduction
- ✖ Research design and data collection
- ✖ Descriptive statistics
- ✖ Predictors of prosecution
- ✖ Correlates of culture and injury
- ✖ Questions, comments, and discussion



RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

- ✘ **Background:** Third funded study of violence against women
- ✘ **Purpose:** Offender accountability and offense reduction
 - + Descriptive and inferential analyses of assaults in domestic violence incidents in (rural) Alaska
- ✘ **Sample:** All assaults in domestic violence incidents reported to Alaska State Troopers in 2004, closed by the time of the study
 - + Excludes other types of domestic violence
 - + *Excludes reports to local or municipal police departments*
 - + 1,281 total cases
 - + 1,095 cases involved one suspect and one victim



DATA ELEMENTS

- ✘ **Suspect data**: Demographics, alcohol or drug use, present upon Trooper arrival, was interviewed, admitted guilt or confessed, violated DVPO, COR or COP, medical treatment
- ✘ **Victim data**: Demographics, alcohol or drug use, consulted someone prior to report, present upon Trooper arrival, interviewed, cooperated with AST, # and type of injuries, medical treatment, response characteristics
- ✘ **Witness data**: Demographics, relationships, interview characteristics



DATA ELEMENTS

- ✘ **Report data**: Person who reported, detachment and unit, first agency notified, # and type of charges, # of witnesses, # suspects, # victims, closure codes, time to closure
- ✘ **V-S Incident data**: Nature and status of relationship, living arrangements, method of contact, racial combination, age combination, precipitating factors, stalking behavior, child present
- ✘ **Legal resolutions**: Referred, accepted, convicted



REPORTS

N=1,281

Person reporting	N	%
Victim	734	57.3
Other	547	42.7
Total	1,281	

Agency notified	N	%
AST	1,020	79.6
VPSO, VPO, other	261	20.4
Total	1,281	

	Charges		Assault Charges	
Number of charges	N	%	N	%
1	661	51.6	924	72.1
2+	620	48.4	357	27.9
Total	1,281		1,281	
Average	1.88		1.41	

Time to closure	%
Two weeks	46.7
Four weeks	66.6
Eight weeks	80.8
Average	6.3 weeks



SUSPECTS

N=1,356

Race	N	%
Caucasian	695	51.4
AK Native	613	45.3
Other	45	3.4
Total	1,353	

Age	N	%
1 to10	1	0.1
11 to 17	84	6.2
18 to 20	108	8.0
21 to 30	423	31.4
31 to 40	368	27.3
41 to 50	262	19.5
51+	100	7.4
Total	1,346	

	No		Yes		Total
Characteristic	N	%	N	%	
Male	319	23.6	1,034	76.4	1,353
Used alcohol	537	43.0	713	57.0	1,250
Present upon Trooper arrival	284	21.5	1,035	78.5	1,319
Interviewed	283	21.3	1,044	78.7	1,327
DVPO for this victim	1,330	98.7	17	1.3	1,347
Violated conditions of release	1,320	97.9	28	2.1	1,348
Violated conditions of probation	1,280	95.6	59	4.4	1,339



VICTIMS

N=1,523

Race	N	%
Caucasian	763	50.6
AK Native	712	47.2
Other	32	2.1
Total	1,507	

Age	N	%
1 to10	54	3.6
11 to 17	171	11.4
18 to 20	130	8.7
21 to 30	396	26.4
31 to 40	321	21.4
41 to 50	279	18.6
51+	151	10.1
Total	1,502	

	No		Yes		Total
Characteristic	N	%	N	%	
Female	458	30.4	1,047	69.6	1,505
Used alcohol	976	67.7	466	32.3	1,442
Present upon Trooper arrival	55	3.7	1,426	96.3	1,481
Cooperated w/ AST	180	12.5	1,255	87.5	1,435
Victim consulted someone before reporting	1,125	76.4	348	23.6	1,473



INCIDENTS

N=1,540

Child present	N	%
No	654	57.0
Yes	493	43.0
Total	1,147	

Most serious charge	N	%
1 st to 3 rd degree assault	258	16.8
4 th degree assault	1,282	83.2
Total	1,540	

Precipitating factors	N	%
Disagreement	453	34.3
Alcohol or drugs	322	24.4
Jealousy infidelity	160	12.1
Child care, custody, or discipline	129	9.6
Controlling activities	96	7.3
Personal insults	80	6.1
Financial	65	4.9
Other	15	1.1
Total	1,320	



RATES OF PROSECUTION

Stage	N	% of reported	% of referred	% of accepted
Reported	1,095	100.0	--	--
Referred	874	79.8	100.0	--
Accepted	753	68.8	86.2	100.0
Convicted	591	54.0	67.6	78.5

Nationwide prosecution	%
Reports prosecuted	34
Arrests prosecuted	59
Overall conviction	51
Total	

Does not support

*Nationwide conclusions of under prosecution

*Maze of Injustice (Amnesty International, 2005)



Significant Predictors of Prosecution	Referred Exp(b)	Accepted Exp(b)	Convicted Exp(b)
Victim was interviewed	5.794		
IPV	2.918		
Suspect used alcohol or drugs	2.473		2.319
Time to closure less than or = to avg.	2.284		
Common living arrangements	2.058		
Suspect 33 years or older	2.028		
Suspect admitted guilt or confessed		3.114	1.752
Total charges greater than one		2.686	1.794
Person reporting was not the victim		2.318	
Victim suffered injury		2.315	
Child was present		2.282	
Suspect male		2.191	
Reported to VPSO, VPO, or other than AST			2.367



POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- ✘ Investigate and document victim injuries
- ✘ Corroborate victim's description of events
- ✘ Interview and interrogation techniques
- ✘ Documentation of suspect's alcohol use
- ✘ Explore differential prosecution of IPV and DV
- ✘ Expand VPSO and VPO programs

TYPES OF DOCUMENTED INJURY

	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Bruising	495	40.6	723	59.4
Laceration or bite	355	28.1	907	70.8
Bloody nose or lip	133	10.5	1128	89.5
Black or swollen eyes	131	10.4	1130	89.6
Strangulation*	66	5.2	1194	94.8
Stab wound*	20	1.6	1243	98.4
Fracture*	14	1.1	1233	98.9
Broken or loosened teeth*	9	.7	1254	99.3
Gun shot wound*	5	.4	1258	99.6
Genital injury	3	.2	1251	99.8

*Coded as serious injury



DOCUMENTED INJURY & MEDICAL TREATMENT

	N	%
No documented injury	428	39.5
Single injury	385	35.5
Multiple injuries	271	25.0
Total	1,084	

	N	%
Serious injury	81	12.3
Other injury	575	87.7
Total	656	

	N	%
Medical treatment	128	19.6
No medical treatment	524	80.4
Total	652	



CORRELATES OF DOCUMENTED INJURY

	Injury	Serious Injury	Multiple Injuries	Medical Treatment
Suspect's alcohol use	X		X	X
Victim's alcohol use	X		X	X
Female victim			X	
Younger victim		X	X	
Living together				X
IPV	X			
Alaska Native suspect	X			X
Alaska Native victim				X



ALASKA NATIVE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- ✗ DV common cause of injury and death for women
- ✗ Alaska Native women:
 - + 3 times more likely to experience DV than other women
 - + 8 to 12 times incidence rate
 - + 4 times more likely severe injury or death
- ✗ Concerns of inadequate prosecution



CULTURAL FACTORS

- ✗ Alcohol use significantly associated with Alaska Native suspects and victims
- ✗ Report made by someone other than Alaska Native victim
- ✗ Documented stalking preceding DV more common among Non-Alaska Native victims
- ✗ Victim Response Characteristics
 - + Less likely: Yell, threaten suspect, call someone for help
 - + More likely: Cooperate and run (no significant difference)



IMPLICATIONS

- ✘ Enhance detection and documentation of victim injury
- ✘ Survey for injury incidence rates and other predictors of victim injury
- ✘ Expand substance abuse treatment, victim, and other social services
 - + Culturally relevant
- ✘ Expand Village Police Officer (VPO) and Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) programs



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QUESTIONS*COMMENTS*DISCUSSION

